

Iowa Fishing Report

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The Iowa Department of Natural Resources issues a weekly fishing report on Thursdays in an effort to provide the latest information heading into the weekend. The weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys, and county and state parks staff. For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

Northwest

Ice has thawed around the edges of lakes and some open holes have developed. Care should be taken when walking onto ice.

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Fishing continues to be good for yellow perch closer to shore in 8 to 15 feet of water around the pump house, using jigging lures tipped with minnow heads or perch eyes and using a slip bobber rig baited with a minnow. Bluegill fishing is fair at the North Grade and in Angler's Bay using small ice jigs tipped with wax worms. Crappie fishing is fair in Angler's Bay using chartreuse or white and pink glow in the dark ice jigs tipped with a wax worm around sunrise and sunset.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Bluegill fishing is fair in Little Miller's Bay and Pocahontas Point with small ice jigs tipped with wigglers or wax worms.

East Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Fishing is fair for yellow and white bass using jigging lures tipped with minnow heads or wax worms around sunset in 20 feet of water around Parks Marina.

Upper Gar Lake (Dickinson): Bluegill fishing is fair using small ice jigs tipped with live bait.

Lake Minnewashta (Dickinson): Bluegill and yellow perch fishing is fair using small ice jigs tipped with live bait.

Lower Gar Lake (Dickinson): Fish for northern pike at the outlet using live bait suspended below a bobber or large plastics slowly twitched.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Recent warm weather has made ice conditions unsafe for most of the lake.

Silver Lake (Worth): A few yellow perch are being caught fishing the north side of the lake by the county park and near the boat ramp on the southwest side. Try using a jig tipped with a minnow for best results.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Bluegill and crappie fishing is fair, try using a small jig tipped with a wax worm.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Fishing is excellent for crappie in the marina. White bass are good off the jetties. The lake is completely ice free

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Fishing is good on the windy shoreline for catfish on shad guts. The lake is ice free

Brushy Creek Lake (Webster): West boat ramp is ice free. Approximately half the lake is ice covered.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Water levels are stable to slightly rising on the upper Mississippi River. Water levels on Thursday were 8.31 feet at Lansing, 14.97 feet at Lynxville, 6.22 feet at Guttenberg, 8.67 feet at Dubuque, 6.43 feet at Bellevue and 10.42 feet at Camanche. Look for fishing to improve as the water temperature rises. In the upper pools, there is still some ice on the backwater areas, but conditions are deteriorating rapidly and an airboat is the only way to access some of these areas. The temperature at Bellevue on Thursday was in the low 40s and water clarity continues to improve. Care must always be taken while fishing during the spring melting season.

Anglers around the New Albin area (**Pool 9**) are still catching some panfish through the ice using a jig tipped with a wax worm. Anglers are catching bluegills using night crawlers along the bottom near the Lansing Power Plant. In **Pool 10**, tailwater fishing has been fair below the dam at Lynxville with short walleye and saugers being caught. A number of northern pike are also being reported by anglers fishing for saugers. Use a jig tipped with a minnow to catch these fish. Some airboats have been accessing Mudhen Lake to catch panfish through the ice using a jig tipped with a wax worm. Spring Lake, north of Prairie du Chien, has been producing bluegills and crappies. Bussey Lake, near Guttenberg (**Pool 10**), has reports of anglers catching northern pike on tip ups. In **Pool 11**, tailwater fishing has been good in Guttenberg. Many 10 to 12-inch sauger are being caught so you will have to sort, but a number of 14 to 16-inch saugers are also biting. Walleye are beginning to bite in the tailwaters with most fish taking jigs tipped with a minnow. Anglers are catching some crappie and northern pike through the ice on Swift Slough (**Pool 11**). Walleye and sauger fishing has been fair for early in the season; however, look for things to pick up quickly once the water temperature warms. Anglers at **Lock and Dam 11** in Dubuque are catching mostly saugers and having to sort through small fish, but there are a few limits coming in. Fishing has been about the same at **Lock and Dam 12** in Bellevue; although, a few more walleye are being caught with many in the slot. Northern pike can be caught on in Illinois pocket below the dam. Fishing at **Lock and Dam 14** in Clinton has been slower due to higher turbidity levels.

Cedar River (Mitchell and Floyd): The ice went out on the main river this week so the water should warm fairly quickly now. Angling for walleye has been good, but fish are still in their over-wintering holes. Water temperature is still cool, so use a slow presentation. Catfishing is slow, but should start to pick up this week.

Cedar (Black Hawk and Bremer) and **Shell Rock rivers** (Black Hawk and Butler): Open water conditions exist and anglers are fishing for walleye by boat and shore using jigs with a twister tail fished with or without minnows. Mid-afternoon seems to be a good time to fish and one angler reported catching his limit in just over an hour on Wednesday (14 to 19.25-inch walleyes are being reported). Fish the edges along the rocks in about 3 feet of water. A few northern pike (one measuring 21 inches) are also being caught as the pike spawning seasons draws near. River levels are currently falling and fishing should improve as area rivers and creeks recede.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): River levels are currently stable and conditions are good for angling throughout Delaware and Jones counties. Recent river levels have

moved fish out of their over-wintering areas as fish ready themselves for spring spawning activities. Try fishing drop-offs and current breaks from main flow areas using jigs tipped with or without a minnow for walleyes and smallmouth bass. Also, concentrate efforts near low head dams as walleyes migrate up river for spawning activities. Try fishing immediately below the Lake Delhi Dam or the next pool down from the boat ramp for walleyes and northern pike.

Upper Iowa River (Winneshiek): Anglers report catching a few small walleye below lower dam in Decorah. The sucker fishing around Lonning's Landing has really turned on—use night crawlers and be prepared to hang on!

Wapsipinicon River (Buchanan): River levels are currently falling from recent rainfall events. Anglers should concentrate on vertical fishing near the current breaks or in the slack water areas out of the main current using 1/8 to 1/2 ounce jig and twister tails tipped with or without a minnow for northern pike and walleye.

Brinker Lake (Black Hawk): Anglers are catching some crappies drifting in 15 to 18 feet of water near drop-off areas using jigs or minnows under a slip bobber rig.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Ice conditions are deteriorating very quickly. There is open water by the aerators. A few catfish, crappie and bluegill are being caught using a jig tipped with a wax worm.

Lake Meyer (Winneshiek): Ice conditions unsafe.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Ice conditions unsafe.

Yellow River (Winneshiek and Allamakee): Angling for trout has been good in the deeper holes and around log jams using spinners.

Northeast Iowa Trout Streams: With this nicer weather, more anglers have been out and reports of happy anglers are coming in daily. Water clarity is generally excellent, and mayflies and stoneflies are hatching. Use more natural looking jigs and spinners with clearer water. Trout calendars are now available on the web. Log onto www.iowadnr.gov and click on *fishing* and then choose *trout stocking*. Stocking will begin the week of April 1.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 20: River levels throughout pools 16 to 20 have fallen below flood stage. Main channel water temperatures range from 43 to 45 degrees and water clarity has improved. Most area fishing reports are coming from lakes and ponds.

In **Pool 16**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 15 is 8.24 feet. River levels are forecasted to remain steady over the weekend. Walleye and sauger fishing in the tailwaters has been slow. A few anglers have been catching channel catfish on shad. Some bluegills and crappies are being caught on minnows and wax worms in Sunset Marina. In **Pool 17**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 16 is 7.14 feet. Fishing has been slow due to high water this past week.

In **Pool 18**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 17 is 9.71 feet and falling. Tailwater fishing has been slow for walleyes and saugers due to high water. In **Pool 19**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 18 is 6.36 feet and falling. Fishing on the river has been slow due

to high water. In **Pool 20**, tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 19 is 9.03 feet and falling. Fishing has been slow due to high water.

Lake Darling (Washington): Last week's rains filled the lake back up but the drain pipe remains open and as of the March 19 the lake is down about four feet and will continue to drop until the lake is dry again. There are no fish in the lake.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): The bass are moving into the shallow bays later in the day when the sun has had a chance to warm the water up.

Lake Geode (Henry): The dock at the main ramp is in and plenty of anglers have been enjoying the nice weather but not much as been biting.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): The lake level is 2 feet above normal pool. Water temperature is ranging from the upper 30s to the low 40s depending on location. Use cut bait or shad guts to catch channel catfish on windblown shorelines.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Walleyes have started biting on jigs tipped with minnows along the rocky shorelines. A few bluegills have been biting on small jigs fished in the shallows.

Lake Wapello (Davis): The lake has been completely drained. Now would be a good time to take the opportunity to look at the new fish habitat that has been added to the lake.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Channel catfish have been biting on dead minnows or shad guts. Largemouth bass have been hitting on spinner baits fished slowly and also soft plastics.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): The lake is full and most docks are in at the boat ramps. The main lake water temperature is in the low 40s and a few channel catfish are being caught on cut bait.

Coralville Reservoir (Johnson): The lake level as of March 18 is 694 feet and falling; normal pool is 679 feet. It is projected to be 690 feet by the weekend. The water is very dirty and no fishing reports are available.

Kent Park (Johnson): No fishing report at this time.

Diamond Lake (Poweshiek): No fishing report at this time.

Lake Iowa (Iowa): No fishing report at this time.

Hannen Lake (Benton): No fishing report at this time.

Rodgers Lake (Benton): The lake has sustained a winter fish kill due to low oxygen levels. The severity has not been determined yet.

Union Grove Lake (Tama): No fishing report at this time.

Otter Creek Lake (Tama): No fishing report at this time.

Skunk River (Washington, Keokuk and Henry): Anglers are doing very well catching catfish. I would try using either cut bait or night crawlers as the catfish are feeding on fish that died during the winter or on worms that got washed in during the flooding. The river is down but it is still flowing fast so use caution when boating.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Southwest

Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers (Polk, Dallas, Boone and Marion counties): River levels are good for fishing. Walleye fishing has been slow, but with the recent

warm temperatures a few more walleyes are being caught below dams. The most successful reports from the Des Moines River are from the Boone Waterworks Dam and Fraser Dam in Boone County, and below Saylorville and Red Rock. Reports from the North Raccoon River are coming from the dams in Adel and Redfield. Use bright colored jigs such as pink or chartreuse with either white or chartreuse twister tails. Some anglers are doing better tipping with a minnow.

Contact Ben Dodd at (515) 432-2823, Ext.108, for information on the above area lakes

Ice is completely gone and a lot of open water fishing is occurring. Water temperatures are in the upper 30s. Smaller lakes and ponds warm up quicker and have been producing better angling.

Icaria (Adams): Some walleyes are being caught from deeper water.

Three Mile Lake (Union): The lake is open and boat anglers are catching a few walleye in 18 to 25 feet of water. Some channel catfish are caught using shad bait.

Twelve Mile Lake (Union): A little bit of walleye angling is occurring over the deep rock areas.

Contact Gary Sobotka at (641) 464-3108 for information on the above area lakes.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Crappie fishing is good in the canals and along rocks on the west side of the main lake. Anglers having the most success are using white feather jigs or chartreuse tube jigs. Walleyes are being caught on the west side of the lake using twister tails and minnows.

Anita (Cass): Crappie fishing is good around the jetties casting small white and red tube jigs. Jetties around the main boat ramp and the pontoon area have been especially good. Crappies are 8 to 9 inches. Anglers are catching a few bluegills while fishing crappies.

Anderson Area (Montgomery): Crappie fishing is good along the dam casting white twister tails. Bluegill fishing has been fair for 8 to 9-inch fish.

Greenfield (Adair): Bluegill fishing is fair around jetties casting small jigs tipped with wax worms.

Farm Ponds: Anglers are catching largemouth bass and bluegills in area ponds.
Reminder: Ask permission before fishing private farm ponds.

Contact Bryan Hayes at (712) 769-2587 for information on the above area lakes.

For more information on general fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

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